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August 7, 2000

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CALFED Bay-Delta Program

Mr. Steve Ritchie, Acting Executive Director
Cal-Fed Bay-Delta Program
1416 Ninth Street, Suite 1155
Sacramento, CA 95814

Ref: Final Programmatic EIS/EIR

Dear Mr. Ritchie:

I am writing to urge you to delay the closing of the comment period for the EIS/EIR referenced above. It is an extremely complex and voluminous document that contains many substantive changes from its predecessor versions. Additional public hearings to allow input by those most directly affected by its provisions should be scheduled. It is my understanding that a significant number of adjustments have been made and without adequate time to discern the changes, and their impact on those who must eventually abide by the same would be unfair.

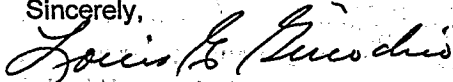
As a rancher whose family has been in the business of farming and livestock production since the 1870's in Contra Costa County, I am well aware the consequences of not fully comprehending the scope of new governmental regulations as they come into place. We provide significant wildlife habitat on our over 7000 acres in this county and additional cover for wildfowl and upland game on our rice and irrigated pasture acreage in Yuba County.

It should be noteworthy that the Local, State and Federal governments, in various capacities, own in excess of 50% of the land in California, yet when it comes time to provide for additional enhancements for fish and wildlife the government looks to remove further acreage from agricultural production which is home to over 75% of the wildlife by the governments own estimates. It seems that private ownership has provided a better home for these critters than that which the various government entities provide. Far better, it would seem to me, to get into some sort of partnership with the private sector as has been suggested in earlier proposals, than to simply remove additional lands from agriculture.

Additional "off stream" storage facilities as also previously brought to the table, seem to have been ignored as well. To simply "redistribute" existing water supplies does little to solve the problems of adequate water resources for wildlife, environment enhancement, growing municipal demands as well as supplies sufficient to feed the hungry nation and the world. More efficient use of existing supplies, while an admirable goal, can not be expected to provide yields matching the successes of the past without also, seriously considering the expansion of storage of water in periods of plenty. It is no secret that California, without adequate water, would soon revert to a "desert" incapable of supplying the needs of people, agriculture or the environment.

Again, I strongly urge that you consider extension of the comment period and explore the real opportunities for expansion of storage while there is still time to do so. Many "real solutions" may yet surface, given the opportunity.

Sincerely,



LOUIS E. GINOCHIO

cc: Senator Dianne Feinstein
Senator Barbara Boxer
Rep. George Miller

Governor Gray Davis Contra Costa Co. Bd. of Supervisors
Senator Richard Rainey Yuba County Bd. of Supervisors
Assemblyman Tom Torlakson

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